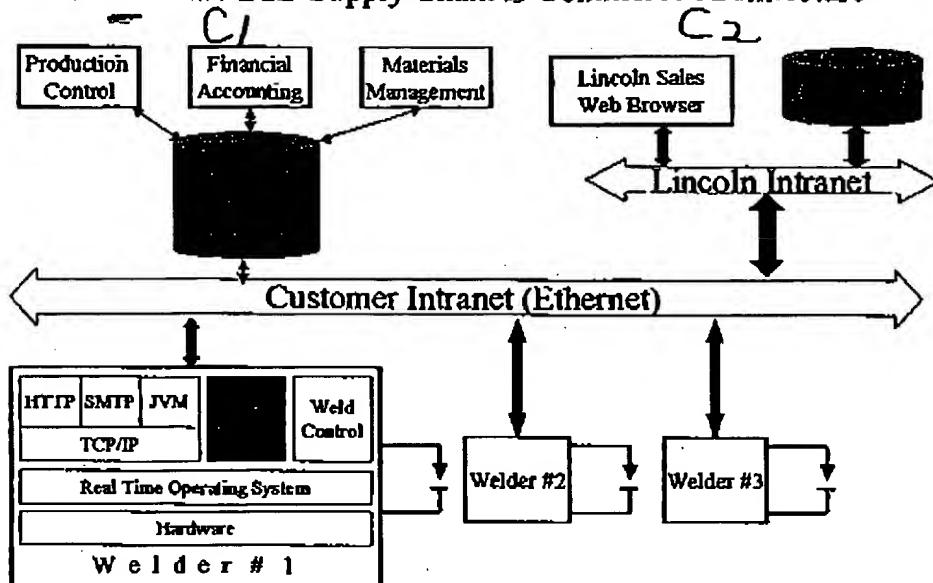


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## EXHIBIT A.

## SmartWire B2B Supply Chain E-Commerce Architecture



Chris Hsu

SmartWire (TM) - Chris Hsu

Title

Supply Chain E-Commerce Enabled by Point of Consumption Monitor

Chris Hsu ~  
October 17, 2000

George B. Blawie

## Summary of the Invention

This invention relates to a business method enabled by Point of Consumption Monitor, and electronic commerce facilitated by supply chain extranet between welding products manufacturer, consumer, and distributor.

Lincoln Welder #1 contains a "consumable monitor" which keeps track of consumable usage and the amount left, at the point of consumption (POC). Each Lincoln welding system provides connectivity to a customer's Enterprise databases. As the consumable is used in production, work in process wire inventory is debited. With pre-determined reorder trigger level, and at the discretion of a customer's supply management, an electronic order can be routed via Extranet to Lincoln's enterprise planning/resource database (SAP). This order transaction can be monitored and controlled by a customer's procurement/supply management department and Lincoln's Sales department, and optionally by a distributor. The electronic order is processed by the SAP customer database, order database, finished goods inventory database and pricing database and an order confirmation invoice, lead time and delivery is automatically generated and sent to the customer's Supply Management (optionally to distribution center), depending on the availability of inventory including back-orders. Optionally, the consumable usage information can be used along